

**CLAIM AMENDMENTS**

Please cancel claims 3, 5, 11 and 14.

Please amend claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 10, 12, 13 and 15 as set out below:

1 (currently amended). An electronic document management system for verifying the contents of an electronic document exchanged through a network, and said contents defining said electronic document and comprising a predetermined electronic form template and variable data input by a user into said predetermined electronic form template, said system comprising:

- (a) at least one data storage means for storing said user-input variable data and said template;
- ~~(a) (b)~~ a data capturing component for capturing and validating said user-input variable data defining an electronic document, wherein said data comprises at least said variable data, and forwarding said validated variable data for to said storage means;
- (b) (c) a document digest generator for generating a unique document digest from said stored user-input variable data and said template defining said defined electronic document by applying a secure algorithm thereto, whereby said document digest is uniquely associated with said defined electronic document, and forwarding said document digest to said storage means for storage in association with said defined electronic document;
- ~~(c) (d)~~ a barcode generator for generating for each page of said electronic document a unique barcode associated with that specific page, based on paging details identifying said page and a barcode from said generated document digest whereby said barcode uniquely identifies said defined electronic document and the contents thereof;

- (d) (e) a document forwarding component for forwarding said defined electronic document with ~~said barcode added thereto~~ each said unique barcode added to said specific page of said electronic document associated therewith for use by a user;
- (e) (f) a document receiving component for receiving from a user a signed electronic document comprising variable data and a barcode for each page of said document; and,
- (f) (g) a barcode verification component for determining the validity of each said barcode of said received electronic document wherein a said document digest component of said barcode is compared to said stored document digest associated with said defined electronic document.

2 (currently amended). An electronic document management system according to claim 1 wherein a unique document number is generated for said defined electronic document, said document number is stored with said captured data and said barcodes are ~~digest is~~ generated from said document digest ~~defined electronic document and said document number.~~

3 (cancelled).

4 (currently amended). An electronic document management system according to claim 2 ~~3~~ wherein a unique document revision number is generated for said defined electronic document, said document revision number is stored with said captured data and said barcodes are ~~digest is~~ generated from said document digest, said document number ~~defined electronic document and said document and said revision number numbers.~~

5 (cancelled).

6 (currently amended). An electronic document management system according to claim 4 5 and further comprising a document image generator for generating an electronic image of said barcoded defined electronic document, wherein said document forwarding component forwards said electronic image.

7 (original). An electronic document management system according to claim 6 wherein said received electronic document has been hand-signed and faxed by said user.

8 (original). An electronic document management system according to claim 6 and further comprising a digital exchange key generator for generating a unique digital exchange key associated with said defined electronic document, said generated unique digital exchange key being generated by applying said secure algorithm to said electronic image, and forwarding said digital exchange key for storage.

9 (original). An electronic document management system according to claim 8 wherein said electronic document received by said document receiving component comprises a digital signature and said system further comprises a digital signature authentication component for authenticating said digital signature and a digital exchange key verification component for determining the validity of said received electronic document, wherein said digital exchange key verification component determines a digital exchange key by applying said secure algorithm to said received electronic document and comparing said determined digital exchange key to said stored unique digital exchange key associated with said defined electronic document.

10 (currently amended). A method for managing and verifying the contents of an electronic document exchanged through a network said contents defining said electronic document and comprising a predetermined electronic form template and variable data input by a user into said predetermined electronic form template, said method comprising:

(a) storing said user-input variable data and said template;

- (a) (b) capturing and validating said user-input variable data defining an electronic document, whereby said data comprises at least said variable data, and forwarding said validated variable data for storage;
- (b) (c) generating a unique document digest from said stored user-input variable data and said template defining said defined electronic document by applying a secure algorithm thereto whereby said document digest is uniquely associated with said defined electronic document, and forwarding said document digest for storage in association with said defined electronic document;
- (e) (d) generating for each page of said electronic document a unique barcode associated with that specific page, based on paging details identifying said page and a barcode from said generated document digest whereby said barcode uniquely identifies said defined electronic document and the contents thereof;
- (d) (e) forwarding said defined electronic document with said barcode added thereto each said unique barcode added to said specific page of said electronic document associated therewith for use by a user;
- (e) (f) receiving from a user a signed electronic document comprising variable data and a barcode for each page of said document; and,
- (g) (h) determining the validity of each said barcode of a document received by said document receiving component wherein a said document digest component of said barcode is compared to said stored document digest associated with said defined electronic document.

11 (cancelled).

12 (currently amended). A method according to claim 11 and further comprising generating a unique document number for said defined electronic document and forwarding said document number for storage with said captured data, whereby said ~~barcodes are digest~~ is generated from said document digest ~~defined electronic document~~ and said document number.

13 (currently amended). A method according to claim 12 and further comprising generating a unique document revision number for said defined electronic document and forwarding said document revision number for storage with said captured data, whereby said ~~barcodes are digest~~ is generated from said document digest, said document number ~~defined electronic document and said document~~ and said revision number numbers.

14 (cancelled).

15 (currently amended). A method according to claim ~~13~~ 14 and further comprising generating an electronic image of said barcoded defined electronic document and forwarding said image for use by a user.

16 (original) A method according to claim 15 and further comprising generating a unique digital exchange key associated with said defined electronic document by applying said secure algorithm to said electronic image and forwarding said digital exchange key for storage.

17 (original). A method according to claim 16 whereby said electronic document received by said document receiving component comprises a digital signature, said method further comprising:

- (a) authenticating said digital signature; and,
- (b) determining the validity of said received electronic document by applying said secure algorithm to said received electronic document and comparing the

resulting determined digital exchange key to said stored unique digital exchange key associated with said defined electronic document.

18 (original). A method according to claim 15 whereby said received electronic document has been hand-signed and faxed by said user.